RAN on Wire 7-12-93

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Deb, sorry this took so long. I'm still trying to get into the ''swing'' of things. Hope it's the right piece.

Shawn

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^AM-MD--JFK Collection,8jt,640(
^Second JFK Researcher's Papers Donated To Hood College(
^By DEB RIECHMANN=
^Associated Press Writer=

FREDERICK, Md. (AP) Sylvia Meagher spent much of her life delving into the John F. Kennedy assassination, but while she had a fondness for mysteries, she steered clear of theories and whodunits in the case.

Meagher's allegiance to only facts and evidence is apparent in the 24 file drawers of her papers on the subject that now are available to the public at the Hood College library in Frederick.

''The value of the collection is definitely going to be the personal correspondence she maintained with everybody in the assassination arena,'' said Gerald McKnight, a Hood history professor who teaches a course titled ''Politics of Assassination.''

''The Kennedy assassination was dinner left on the table and it stinks to high heaven,'' McKnight said. ''There is going to have to be a time when we come to terms with it. She was in the center of it. (The papers) will make for good cultural and political history.''

McKnight said the Meagher papers are a good addition to the more than 200,000 pages of information that assassination researcher Harold Weisberg recently donated to Hood College. Weisberg, a former journalist, Senate investigator and Office of Strategic Services analyst, has written several books on the case.

Weisberg and Meagher did not agree on all aspects of their investigations, but both criticized the conclusions of the Warren Commission. Included in Meagher's collection is an index she compiled and had published of the 26 volumes of the Warren Commission report, which comprises 10 million words.

The collection also includes her book, ''Accessories After the Fact: The Warren Commission, The Authorities and The Report,'' scores of other books on the subject, government documents, reel-to-reel tapes and clippings on the assassination.

In Feb. 23, 1967, Meagher wrote a letter to New Orleans, La. District Attorney James Garrison accompanying a copy of her index of the Warren Commission Report, the only index on record.

''I hope it will prove to be useful, because, as I wired you yesterday, I should like to be of any possible service in your further investigation,'' Meagher wrote. ''Let justice be done, though the heavens fall.''

However, her feelings for Garrison soon soured. A year later in

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a letter to a friend, Meagher wrote.

"If I permit myself to become indiscriminate and promiscuous in my 'friendships' with those who, knowingly or unknowingly, aver helping or condoning or fronting for that master of fantasy and unscrupulousness in New Orleans, I could not survive one night in company with my conscience."

Her notes cover everything from JFK's car to the curtain rods that Lee Harvey Oswald said he was carrying in brown paper, said Don Schumaker Jr., a spokesman for Hood.

She even clipped a legal notice in a Dallas newspaper that the U.S. Treasury Department ran to see if anyone laid claim to the Mannlicher-Carcano rifle that was allegedly used by Oswald to shoot Kennedy.

Her niece, Susan Kaplan of East Brunswick, N.J., said her aunt lived most her life in Greenwich Village, N.Y. She was an avid reader, often reading a book a day. She had a diversified group of friends, a "delightful sense of humor," and had a passion for baseball, ballet and poker, she said.

Her health failed as she got older and she became very sedentary after she retired from her career as an administrator and writer of analytical reports at the World Health Organization, a affiliate of the United Nations. Her niece said she died on Jan. 14, 1989 at the age of 67.

Before she died she asked Gren Stone, an expert in the death of Robert Kennedy, to find a place where her papers could be used by serious researchers. Stone moved them from her apartment to Hood College for safekeeping, and before he died, he willed Meagher's papers to the institution, McKnight said.

AP-BAL-07-12-93 1309EDT